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A MONTHLY REVIEW OF THE UFO PHENOMENON
REPORTS, INVESTIGATIONS & ANALYSES

"There is no hope of advance in science without a paradox."—Niels Bohr

FRED VALENTICH: THE MISSING AUSTRALIAN PILOT
The Most Complete (and Perhaps Final) Report in Print

MINI-UFO LEAVES WELL-WITNESSED PHYSICAL TRACE IN MISSOURI

16 UFOS SELECTED FROM 183 U.S. CASES: Aug. 15-Sept. 14

Editor-in-Chief: J. Allen Hynek **Managing Editor:** Allan Hendry

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All notices of change of address must be sent six weeks in advance and accompanied by old and new addresses. J. Allen Hynek, Chairman of the Board.

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EDITORIAL

by Dr. J. Allen Hynek

A great disservice to Ufology was perpetrated by OMNI magazine in its April 1979 issue. In an article by E. Lee Speigel, *First Encounter,* there are presented about as good a collection of highly questionable photographs of UFOs as it is possible to assemble, short of showing models suspended on strings. I hasten to point out that Lee Speigel has disclaimed responsibility for this tawdry collection of photos; it is his contention that the photos were selected by the magazine staff on the basis of their colorfulness, eye-appeal, and dramatic quality. They were *not* the photos presented at the United Nations which I narrated. Those were listed in the Oct-Nov issue of IUR, and even in presenting them, I indicated that several were questionable. But those of OMNI!

In a letter to the editors of OMNI I wrote: "I wish to object strenuously to, and to disassociate my name from, the photographs on pp. 52-59 of the April issue of . . . . I have tried for many years to present a responsible view of the UFO phenomenon and to demonstrate that it is worthy of serious scientific attention. But the photographs you chose to include . . . obvious fakes and cloud pictures—do great disservice . . . . Of the fourteen photographs only three may be UFO photographs. Of the rest, six seem to be man-made small discs . . . . three are lenticular clouds, and two may well be internal camera reflections. . . . In the last analysis, one can never state categorically that a photograph purported to be that of a UFO is genuine, even when image enhancement techniques are used. Given enough time, money and ingenuity, just about any photo can be faked. All that it is truly possible to say about UFO photos is

(cont. on back page)

J. Allen Hynek

Search off for pilot in UFO scare

Second sighting in UFO mystery

'It's a long shape . . . coming for me right now . . . hovering on top of me'

UFO MYSTERY

Missing pilot's father says UFO captured his son,plan

UFO PILOT 'NOT HIDING IN BUSH'

PROBE WIDENS ON MISSING PLANE

pilot 'level headed'

PILOT LOST AT SEA

Gosford UFO exper probes Bass Strait mystery

Metal clue in sea hunt for plane

WORLD CALLS ON MISSING 'UFO GRAB' PILOT

Aussie pilot reports seeing U

Hundreds of UFO reports

SEARCH FINDS NO TRACE OF PILOT

Was it the same UFO?

FOREIGN FORUM

This is a representative sampling of UFO sightings obtained from around the world. While we cannot exert the same degree of control over these cases as domestic ones, it is at least of value to see that the same characteristics are reported for the phenomenon abroad as in the U.S.

Saturday, October 21 brought the world the most publicized sighting of the year, the mysterious case of Australian pilot Fred Valentich. As a rule, IUR has difficulty obtaining information on a foreign case, but this one is an exception, for there is only so much that anyone *can* know about it. The solitary witness is "unavailable for comment" . . . perhaps forever. The sources of IUR's information on this matter spring from 70 newspaper clippings from Australia and the U.S., direct calls to news departments in Melbourne, reports from Harry Griesburg, Paul Norman and Bill Chalker overseas and information submitted by Michael Duggin of the University of Sydney and Dr. Richard Haines in the U.S.

Frederick Paul Valentich, 20, had spent three years as a cadet and volunteer instructor with the RAAF Air Training Corps in West Melbourne. He had been flying for two years and held an unrestricted license since February, 1978. Fred needed to build up night flying hours for his commercial pilot's license and needed to pick up crayfish for an Air Training Corps officers' function. Thus, on October 21, he laid aside his meteorology course studies and left Moorabbin Airport in Melbourne at 6:19 PM for a flight to King Island to get both. Flying in the same $43,000 blue and white Cessna 182L ("long-range" type) in which he had trained, he followed the conventional course toward King Island by hugging the shoreline to Cape Otway . . . a route his father said he had flown three times before. He radioed to the Melbourne Flight Service that he had passed the southernmost point of the mainland at 7:00 PM and was flying across the Bass Strait toward the island (this was a "full reporting" flight). Estimated time of arrival at King Island: 7:28 PM. His parents expected to hear from him again at 10 PM, back with his fresh crayfish.

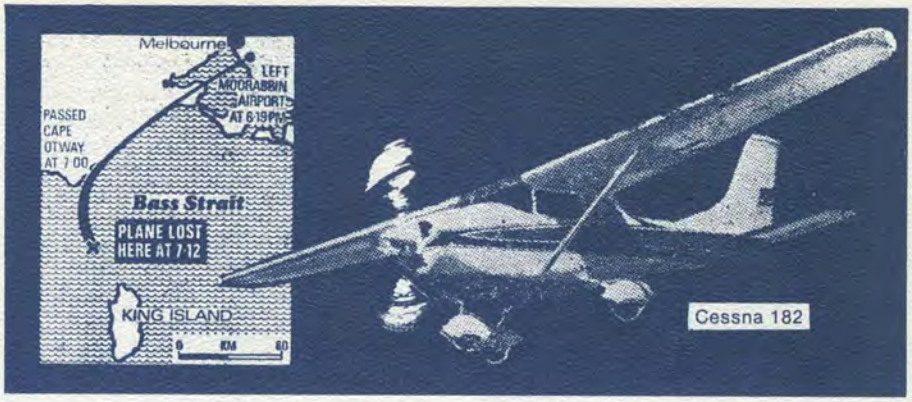
At 7:06 PM, however, Valentich became aware of a neighboring "aircraft" at his 4500-foot altitude, and radioed the Flight Service about his unexpected traffic. While a number

Fred Valentich

of abbreviated accounts have appeared in the press, the following transcript has been thoroughly checked by Ken Williams, the assistant director of public relations of the Department of Transport's Air Transport Group, and he has deemed it a "verbatim" account. Fred Valentich is "DSJ", Melbourne Flight Service is "FS":

7: 06: 14-*DSJ:* Melbourne, this is Delta Sierra Juliet. Is there any known traffic below five thousand?
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, no known traffic.
DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, I am ____ seems (to) be a large aircraft, below five thousand.
7: 06: 44-FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, what type of aircraft is it?
DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, I cannot affirm. It is four bright, it seems to me like landing lights.
7: 07: 00-FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
7: 07: 31-DSJ: Melbourne, this (is) Delta Sierra Juliet. The aircraft has just passed over me at least a thousand feet above.
(*Ed. note:* This, taken literally, would mean a 1000 feet-per-minute climb)
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, roger, and it is a large aircraft, confirmed?
DSJ: Er—unknown, due to the speed it's travelling—is there any Air Force aircraft in the vicinity?
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, no known aircraft in the vicinity.
7: 08: 18-DSJ: Melbourne, it's approaching now from due east towards me.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
7: 08: 14-(Open microphone for two seconds)
7: 08: 48-DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, it seems to me that he's flying over me two, three times at speeds I could not identify.

(*Ed. note:* from 7: 08: 18 to 7: 08: 48, two or three passes were made in 30 seconds flat. That's some aircraft! Even if it was one, such aircraft "buzzing" acts would be a flagrant disregard of air navigation regulations.)
7: 09: 00-FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, roger. What is your actual level?
DSJ: My level is four and a half thousand . . . four, five, zero, zero.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, and you confirm you cannot identify the aircraft?
DSJ: Affirmative.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, roger, standby.
7: 09: 27-DSJ: Melbourne, Delta Sierra Juliet. It's not an aircraft, it is _____ (open microphone for two seconds).
7: 09: 42-FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, Melbourne. Can you describe the -er- aircraft?



DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, as it's flying past, it's a long shape (open microphone for three seconds) . . . cannot identify more than that. It has such speed . . . (open microphone for three seconds) . . . before me right now, Melbourne.
7: 10: 00-FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, roger, and how large would the -er- object be?
7: 10: 19-DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, Melbourne. It seems like it's stationary. What I'm doing right now is orbiting and the thing is just orbiting on top of me also. It's got a green light and sort of metallic (like) it's all shiny (on) the outside.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
7: 10: 46-DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, (open microphone for five seconds) it's just vanished.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
7: 11: 00-DSJ: Melbourne, would you know what kind of aircraft I've got? Is it (a type) military aircraft?
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, confirm the -er- aircraft just vanished?
DSJ: Say again?
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, is the aircraft still with you?
DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, (it's -ah--) (open microphone for two seconds) now approaching from the southwest.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
(*Ed. note:* to have vanished at 7: 10: 46 and flown off far enough to be seen approaching from the southwest less than a minute later suggests considerable speed!)
7: 11: 50-DSJ: Delta Sierra Juliet, the engine is -- rough idling. I've got it set at twenty three, twenty four and the thing is (coughing).
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet, roger. What are your intentions?
DSJ: My intentions are -ah- to go to King Island -ah- Melbourne that strange aircraft is hovering on top of me again. It (open microphone for two seconds) is hovering and it's not an aircraft.
FS: Delta Sierra Juliet.
*7: 12: 28-*Delta Sierra Juliet, Melbourne . . .

. . . and then silence, except for a strange "metallic" sound over his microphone which was held open for 17 seconds. With "perfect" flying conditions—a dusk sky (known to be cloudless at Cape Otway at 5: 48 PM) with a mild northwesterly breeze and unlimited visibility—Valentich had disappeared. He never made it to King Island.

The last controller to speak with Valentich was Steve Robey at the Melbourne Flight Service at Tullamarine. Robey said, "I had to force

Steve Robey

myself to stay as calm as possible. I was stunned but I had to handle it."

THE SEARCH

Oct. 21: Light aircraft initiated a visual and radio search that night.

Oct. 22: An RAAF Orion (a long-range maritime reconnaisance aircraft) spent the whole next day, Sunday, searching the strait. It did find an oil slick 18 miles north of King Island in the late afternoon and dropped a beacon to mark the sight. The searchers were already confident, however, that the slick was too large to be produced by the Cessna.

Oct. 23: A sample of the slick was taken by a boat from Warrnambool. The analysis of the sample was performed by the Defense Department materials research laboratory at Maribyrnong. Result: a weak mix,

probably "marine diesel" and not the Cessna's fuel. A Nomad aircraft scoured an area from Warrnambool to Cape Otway while the Air Force Orion covered the Bass Strait and a Cessna searched the King Island region. Reports from the search area indicated the sea temperature to be around eight degrees above freezing. The searchers felt, though, that Valentich would still stand a good chance of survival if he was wearing his lifejacket.

Oct. 25: By Wednesday night, search aircraft had covered 7000 square miles in four days. Eight aircraft had flown a total of 70 hours. The Australian Coastal Surveillance Organization in Canberra had alerted all shipping and crayfish boats in the area to be on the lookout. A pilot flying at 4000 feet reported sighting what he thought was a plane under water, but reference to charts showed the water to be 180 feet deep with a very choppy surface due to a gale; hence, the Department of Civil Aviation did not consider the report firm enough to follow up.

The RAAF reconnaisance plane also spotted some flotsam in the water 4 km. from the oil slick which looked like a yellow life jacket and part of a fuselage; this caused some brief excitement during the search. A merchant vessel determined, however, that the debris was only fruit cartons and plastic bags, rubbish from a ship. A thorough land search of Cape Otway and King Island also proved fruitless. Thus, the search was called off Wednesday night. An Aero Commander would fly over beaches later in the week to watch for wreckage which might get washed ashore.

Oct. 26: The investigation was switched from the rescue coordination center to the Department of Transport air safety investigation branch. An official said at the time, "the Department of Transport is inquiring into all aspects of the aircraft's last flight. This encompasses the airworthiness of the aircraft, the operation of the aircraft—including the flight plan—and other factors involved—that is, the pilot himself."

WHERE IS FRED VALENTICH?

Fred Valentich's apparently tragic experience immediately became the subject of world-wide press attention. Indeed, the drama of this incident was a marked change from the "Policemen See Distant Ambiguous Light"-variety of report to which the media often seem to restrict themselves. The case also generated global speculation on the Australian pilot's fate. Some of the suggestions in the Australian press seem patently outrageous; instead of a real UFO, Valentich was watching an aurora, then crashed. Another idea posed by Ken Williams, the Department of Transport spokesman, to the press was that the pilot was watching meteorites, got struck by one of them (!), became disoriented and flew upside down, causing his engine to rough-idle and cut out. Does it need to be pointed out that the history of meteorites striking vehicles is almost unprecedented, while the history of UFO involvements with the mysterious disappearance of planes in the Center for UFO Studies computerized UFOCAT number almost twenty? Still, a great deal of debate has centered on a few alternatives to the UFO "plane-napping" suggested by the pilot's last words. Arguments for the "prosecution" and "defense" are listed below, following each proposed alternative:

PREMISE #1: VALENTICH TURNED THE PLANE UPSIDE DOWN IN THE DARK AND WAS SIMPLY WATCHING REFLECTIONS OF HIS PLANE LIGHTS OFF THE WATER.

Arguments in Favor:

1) The sun set at 6: 43 PM that Saturday, and the moon didn't rise until after 11 PM. Mr. Michael Falls, an experienced flight instructor with the Great Pacific Aeroplane Company in Melbourne told the Christchurch STAR that Valentich may have risked his life by flying without a horizon in the dusk sky. "In that case, he may have flown by his instincts instead of his controls. If you can't make out a horizon then you are in big trouble, unless you are experienced with instruments."

2) Valentich made only one night flight before on instruments (thought to be Benalla, 80 miles north of Melbourne). One source stated he only had 15 hours of night flying.

3) Spokesmen for the Department of Transport echoed sentiments that the young Cessna pilot wasn't very experienced and "could easily have accidentally turned the plane upside down and seen his own lights reflected in the sea."

4) Valentich said his plane was "orbiting" (circling) and the UFO was orbiting above him. This effect would be achieved if he was watching his own lights off the ocean surface while upside down; the reflections would move with him.

Arguments Against:

1) The Cessna 182L has a gravity-fed carburator. Upside down, the plane could only fly for 50 seconds at the most (11 seconds, according to another source). The sightings lasted for *6 minutes* as timed by the tape recording.

2) Fred's father Guido told the press, "he was very good in aerobatics. He would have known immediately if his flight position was wrong."

3) There was no sound of a stall warning over the microphone, or engine splutter (though the latter isn't a guaranteed situation).

4) Arthur Schutt, veteran aviator who controls the Melbourne-based Schutt Aviation Company told the press, "In that half-light, the pilot would have soon known if the aircraft had started to turn upside down. The carpet comes out of the floor and the butts fall out of the ashtray."

PREMISE #2: IT WASN'T NECESSARY TO FLY UPSIDE DOWN. HE COULD HAVE CIRCLED STEEPLY INTO THE WATER WHILE WATCHING EITHER THE LIGHTHOUSE BEAMS OF CAPE OTWAY AND KING ISLAND REFLECTING OFF THE CLOUDS . . . OR HIS OWN LIGHTS OFF OF THE WATER IN FRONT OF HIM.

Arguments in Favor:

1) Valentich's instructor, Mr. Aubrey Coates, said he could have become confused by beams from the Cape Otway and Cape Wickham (King Island) lighthouses. Coates has flown in the area for 13 years and claimed that the lights could have appeared like UFOs.

2) Veteran aviator Mr. Arthur Schutt also said the most dangerous time for discrimination was during the switch from visual flight to instruments at dusk. A disoriented pilot would believe his eyes, Schutt said, and not his instruments once he had lost the horizon.

3) Some pilots flying at night crashed after mistaking ground lights for

stars. The U.S. Air Force found that pilots most likely to suffer an "upside down" illusion were those with 2000 to 2500 hours of experience, flying single-engine airplanes.

4) Two experienced pilots have criticized the Department of Transport for even allowing a flight like this. George Smith, former manager of the Tasmanian Aero Club and Colin Kerby of St. Kilda independently stated that the Bass Strait is "a bad stretch of water" with unpredictable weather conditions; as long as the Department allowed single-engine planes, especially with inexperienced pilots, to cross the strait at night, Kerby said "they will just keep going down."

Arguments Against:

1) If Valentich *didn't* fly upside down, how could the UFO fly repeatedly *over* the plane and beyond it?

2) Valentich had *four* instruments to tell him his altitude! His voice was calm and unpanicked and he did, after all, hold a class 4 instrument rating.

3) Steve Robey, the radar controller in the flight, told the press, "I don't believe he was disoriented because he was communicating quite clearly."

PREMISE #3: THE REPORTED UFO MUST HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE CESSNA'S DISAPPEARANCE. IN THE CASE OF A CRASH ALONG A MAJOR AIR ROUTE, IT IS MOST UNUSUAL TO FIND NO WRECKAGE OR OIL SLICK.

Arguments in Favor:

1) There were four orange polystyrene life jackets designed to be visible from the air in the event of a water crash.

2) Parts of the plane were constructed from modular units which float in the event of a crash. None of these easily-visible objects have been found.

3) The plane had a "black box" radio survival beacon broadcasting a distress signal. It was never heard.

Arguments Against:

1) If the plane had sunk into the water, the emergency signal would not have been heard.

2) There were two other plane crashes in this area in the last decade where the planes and pilots were never seen again. First, on December 24, 1969, Peter Phillips, 25, was flying a Fuji low-wing aircraft from King Island to Moorabbin. His last radio message also placed him about 8 km. off Cape Otway at 300 meters altitude. He, too, developed engine trouble and was believed to have crashed into the sea. No trace of *his* plane could be found (no UFO was reported in this incident).

Second, on Sept. 8, 1972, an old World War II Tiger Moth with two people on board disappeared between Hobart and Flinders Island in Bass Strait. On board was Max Price, 57, a "very experienced" pilot who had completely restored his own plane. Also on board was conservationist Brenda Hean, who chartered the flight to skywrite in protest against the flooding of Lake Pedder in Tasmania. The plane left at 10:16 AM and was due to arrive at 12:45 PM. There was enough fuel to last until 2:30 PM. The Tiger Moth also had one of those emergency beacons, but its high-frequency signal was never heard, either.

3) The last thing Valentich reported was engine trouble . . . miles over Bass Strait.

Counter-Argument in Favor:

Even if the plane is discovered to have crashed in Bass Strait, it can still be argued that the reported UFO caused it. The high-speed maneuvers back and forth over the plane suggest a decided intent toward the Cessna. With no known aircraft, civilian or military, in the area and with the exhibition of capabilities exceeding known planes anyway, the notion that an earthly vehicle caused such a crash seems totally invalid.

PREMISE #4: THE WHOLE EVENT WAS A HOAX. VALENTICH IS HIDING SOMEWHERE WITH PLANS TO RETURN IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND DECLARE HIMSELF A "CONTACTEE" TO BECOME FAMOUS (EVEN A CULT LEADER AS SUGGESTED IN THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS).

I. VALENTICH WAS A UFO BUFF, AND LIKELY TO PULL OFF A PRANK LIKE THIS.

Arguments in Favor:

1) Fred Valentich's parents have portrayed a strong impression of their son as a UFO enthusiast in the press. According to the family, Fred collected books and magazines on UFOs. He was so convinced about life on other planets that he felt it was only a matter of time before aliens would invade the earth. His mother, Mrs. Alberta Valentich, was actually quoted in the press as saying: "Freddie was worried that one day a UFO might come down and divide the family . . . that they might take us away."

2) Fred's 16-year old girlfriend, Rhonda Rushton, told the Australian papers, "he once told me that if a UFO did come to earth he'd go back with it but not without me."

Guido Valentich

3) Mrs. Valentich said that she and her son had seen a UFO earlier, around last June. A "very bright" light source, "10 to 20 times bigger" than a star, hovered "several thousand feet" above their home for 10 minutes. Then suddenly it streaked away in a flash. "We were both convinced it was a UFO."

4) Fred's father said he made an effort to see "all the science fiction movies." Columbia pictures "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" was probably the last film he ever saw.

5) Both of Valentich's parents were told that during his time at Sale RAAF Base as an Air Training Corps cadet, he had seen classified material which confirmed his earlier beliefs about UFOs.

Arguments Against:

1) While acknowledging his son's interest, Mr. Valentich told the press that Fred was not a "UFO fanatic." "He was very serious about his flying and would not have played any games," he told the Melbourne SUN. "He was not the type of person who would make up stories, everything had to be very correct and positive for him. He was part of the way towards his commercial pilot's license and had no reason to throw all his work away." He only had to pass meteorology and aerodrome legislation before gaining his commercial license. Mr. Valentich said "he was very keen, quite good and not overconfident."

2) Sqn.-Ldr. Ronald Grandy said he hand-picked Fred Valentich as an air training instructor "because he was no fool." He described the missing pilot as "level-headed and could hold his tongue . . . (he was) common sense on legs." If the Cessna crashed into the water, Grandy was sure that Valentich would have got

out and swum for land if it was possible. "Young Fred taught here on Friday nights and often helped out during the week—I don't know how I'm going to replace him."
3) Don Sowman, chief flying instructor at Southern Air Services said: "he seemed a normal bloke and an average pilot."
4) Wing-Commander Colin Chaliss of the Sale RAAF said, "we have files on unusual aerial sightings, but they are not classified and Mr. Valentich did not see them."
5) If the event was a hoax based on Fred Valentich's UFO enthusiasm, he would have known better than to keep describing the UFO's appearance in different ways:
7:06:44—"four bright lights"
7:09:42—"long shape"
7:10:19—"shiny, metallic object with a green light". If this event was planned in advance, why would he choose to weaken his own story with inconsistencies?

Counter-Argument in Favor:
If Fred Valentich was really "common sense on legs," why did he fly further out to sea with a failing engine when the normal thing would have been to turn back to Cape Otway? He is estimated to have been only 12 nautical miles out. Cape Otway was much further away. Why did he overlook securing the landing lights at King Island when it would be impossible to land without them?

II. VALENTICH'S FATHER WAS IN ON THE DEAL, ANNOUNCING TO THE PRESS THAT ALIENS HAD KIDNAPPED HIS SON TO REINFORCE THE HOAX.
Arguments in Favor:
1) Immediately after the disappearance, Guido Valentich told the press that he believed his son is alive and being held by people from another planet. "I have a very strong feeling that my son is still alive and is being held by someone from another world. The failure to find any sign of my son or his plane strengthens my belief that he has been taken by some strange people for some reason or another. I have no idea why they would want to take my son, but strange things do happen." Note that this is similar to the Travis Walton abduction episode, where Walton's mother exhibited calmness during the days of Travis's absence. She said that Travis told her earlier that if he was ever taken by a UFO, she was not to worry, that he would be brought back safely.

Arguments Against:
1) Mr. Valentich's overt statements are clearly a grief reaction. Not mentioned in the quotes above was his early statement that he would rather believe that Fred was alive on a spaceship "than them finding wreckage of the plane." Another press quote: "I'd rather believe my son was alive on some other planet than dead at the bottom of the sea."
2) That these conclusions do not reflect a pre-arranged plan is further reflected in the dwindling hope displayed by Guido Valentich. His earliest speculation about extraterrestrial abduction envisioned a quick return for his son: "They may want to hold him for a week or so before returning him." By October 29, this duration lengthened: "I believe he was sucked up into the air by a UFO and then forced back to earth somewhere—perhaps in Central Australia. Finally, five weeks later, Mr. Valentich was saying "Probably we will never see Freddy again . . . we hope, perhaps in ten or twenty years, we might see him again."

III. VALENTICH NEVER FLEW BEYOND CAPE OTWAY. HE SECRETLY LANDED ON THE GROUND, BECAUSE NO ONE TRACKED OR SAW OR HEARD HIS FLIGHT OVER CAPE OTWAY.
Arguments in Favor:
1) We only have Valentich's word that he pursued his pre-filed flight plan. He was not tracked on radar during the emergency even though the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) did a radar scan when Valentich asked for identification of the UFO.
Arguments Against:
1) The official explanation for the Cessna's failure to show up on radar was that it was flying too low. While the DCA long-range radar has a 160-nautical mile range, and Valentich *was* only 95 miles out, he was flying at 4500 feet, and the radar coverage *that far out* started at 6000 feet up. If the pilot's estimate of height for the UFO was right (1000 feet higher still), it would also fail to show up.
Counter-Argument in Favor:
Then why did the *search planes* show up in that area on radar when they were only flying at 152 meters (500 feet) altitude?
Counter-Argument in Favor:
The radar conditions are variable; sometimes King Island itself, only 215 meters above sea level, shows up on the screen. False targets were showing up Oct. 21 from a temperature inversion. No photographic record of the scope was made. The RAAF at Laverton was no help here, either, as they also rely on DCA Melbourne radar for such tracking. Once the Cessna left Melbourne's controlled airspace, it was not specifically tracked.

Arguments in Favor (resumed):
2) No one witnessed the plane from the ground, despite requests for such information by the DCA. The flight plan called for Valentich to fly right over the Cape Otway lighthouse; yet despite the clear weather, the lighthouse keeper never heard a plane at 7 PM. Bass Strait fishermen neither saw nor heard anything. Yet in the 1972 Tiger Moth disappearance, 22 accounts were secured from passerby ground witnesses along the Tasmanian coast.

3) There is an unconfirmed report that Victorian police received a report that a light plane made a mysterious late-night landing in the western district, not far from Cape Otway, at about the same time.
4) Valentich did not ask the King Island airport to illuminate the runway before leaving Moorabbin. This was done by Melbourne Flight Service once the UFO got reported. Nor can the landing lights be switched on automatically by radio signals from approaching aircraft. Normal procedures calls for the pilot to arrange this before leaving. Furthermore, press accounts suggest that Valentich never arranged more than a one-way flight path. It sounds like he never expected to make it there!
5) Police have found no fishermen on King Island who had arranged to sell Valentich crayfish . . . the stated reason for the flight.
6) Valentich's long-range Cessna was carrying 300 litres of fuel. Consuming fuel at a rate of 45 litres/hour, he could have kept on flying for a total of 6 hours at a maximum speed of 130 knots for a total flying range of 1040 km. The planned trip was only supposed to last one hour and nine minutes. Why all the extra fuel? Did he really fly somewhere else and *that's* why he didn't show up on radar when Cape Otway was checked?

Total Flight Range Capability

Arguments Against:

2) Valentich's friends say pilots commonly "rounded the turn" at Cape Otway once the lighthouse was in sight without actually flying over it. That Tiger Moth disappeared in daylight at lunchtime.

3) Victorian police officials denied that they have information on a mysterious plane landing. (An earlier press account had senior police officials neither confirming nor denying the report). Department of Transport spokesmen said it would be very difficult to pull off such a landing; "we have no reason to believe the aircraft was anywhere else but near Cape Otway when the message was received."

4) According to Mike Duggin of the University of Sydney, Valentich *did* file a carefully-prepared 2-way flight plan. It is strange that the didn't request the lights, although he *did* only make one night flight in the past.

5) Researcher Paul Norman went to Currie, King Island and deliberately waited until 8 PM to check if crayfish could be secured *without* a prearranged order. He had no difficulty finding fishermen who were happy to comply.

6) Almost all light aircraft tanks are kept topped up at Moorabbin, even for training and practice around the local circuit. What is strange is that Melbourne did not advise Valentich to switch to another fuel tank as soon as he encountered engine difficulty.

IV. THE STRONGEST PROOF THAT VALENTICH IS HOAXING A DISAPPEARANCE LIES IN THE PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS BY 16-YEAR OLD SHOP ASSISTANT, RHONDA RUSHTON, FRED'S GIRLFRIEND. IT'S EVEN KNOWN THAT SHE WENT TO AN APOLLO BAY MOTEL TO MEET HIM THERE!

Arguments in Favor:

1) World-wide attention was given to Miss Rushton's press statement: "We all know Fred is alive and we have told the authorities this, but it is all top secret now," Miss Rushton, who said she had known Fred for six months, told the AUSTRALIAN; "I know Fred is alive. We will see him soon." The Department of Transport announced it would not divulge the details of her confidential disclosures. Miss Rushton said that after telling her story to unnamed authorities, she was told not to tell anyone else. The next day, she dismissed the UFO theory, saying, "I think he has landed somewhere, not crashed."

Rhonda Rushton searched the Cape Otway area by air . . . only to return red-eyed and empty-handed.

2) The WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN (Oct. 28-29) declared that on Thursday, Oct. 26, Rhonda had walked into the Bay Pines Motel at Apollo Bay (100 miles from Melbourne). She asked motel owner Mrs. Joyce Ford to see Fred Valentich. The paper quoted Mrs. Ford as saying, "when I said there was nobody by that name staying here, she seemed ready to cry. She said she had arranged to meet him at 7 o'clock. She just stood there for several minutes as if she couldn't believe me and didn't want to leave."

Arguments Against:

1) The October 29th SUNDAY PRESS quoted Fred Valentich's mother about Rhonda Rushton: "He met (her) six months ago through friends, I think, and they have been going out regularly ever since. He liked her very much but as far as I know there were no marriage plans." Fred's father took a more aggressive stand in the SUNDAY OBSERVER (Oct. 29), stating that Miss Rushton's allusions to the case being a hoax were "very upsetting". "Fred didn't see her very often. She's just got on the bandwagon and the reports have been very upsetting to the family."

2) On the subject of the "motel rendezvous", Rhonda told the SUNDAY PRESS. "I had only gone there to satisfy my own mind about what had happened." To another paper, she said, "I only went there to see what the bush was like where he might have landed." Indeed, Rhonda went on to search the beaches and rugged bush for two days, aided by her parents and a group of Valentich's friends from the Air Training Corps. Miss Rushton envisioned the lost pilot as having returned to Cape Otway and landed, possibly injured

somewhere. She said Valentich often told her he was "scared of water". "If he had any trouble, he would have headed for land, that's for sure." This is contrary, of course, to Valentich's last stated intention. Another friend of Fred Valentich was in the Apollo Bay area, and told the Melbourne AGE, "we know Fred is alive. He's up in the hills but we can't get to him." Sgt. B. C. Klemm of the Apollo-Bay Police commented on the terrain: "There are old abandoned logging towns up there you can't even get to. It could take days for a man to get out of there even if he could survive a plane crash." Rhonda Rushton succeeded in chartering a twin-engined plane which retraced the flight path Valentich used one week earlier between Cape Otway and Lorne (to the NE). Scanning miles of forest with binoculars, Rhonda responded with awe when she saw the thick, desolate terrain. Returning home empty-handed, she told the Oct. 29th SUNDAY PRESS, "I have no plans to

do any more searching myself. I still have this feeling that he was forced to land and is lying out there waiting to be rescued. I know he's alive. I just know it."
3) Another of Valentich's searchers said, "It's nothing to do with drugs. I saw him flatten a bloke once just because the bloke offered him drugs."
4) Finally, too much time has passed for this to be a hoax that would climax in a miraculous reappearance. The case seemed similar to the Travis Walton abduction at first, but Walton reappeared after only a few days.

PREMISE #5: THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT IS COVERING UP SOME OF THE TRUTH OF THIS CASE. ONLY EDITED PORTIONS OF THE TAPED CONVERSATION ARE BEING RELEASED:

Arguments in Favor:
1) The department's press officer, Ken Williams, said: "The tape certainly runs longer than six minutes (the length covered by the transcript-Ed.). It could be half an hour. We released only the highlights." (Ironically, the name of one of the spokesmen who "refused to release the tapes" . . . was Mr. *Nixon*!)
2) The transcript shows the pilot at 7:09 as saying: "It's not an aircraft, it is . . . " (Break in transmission). A "source", unnamed by the Melbourne AUSTRALIAN newspaper, indicated there was no break in transmission and that Mr. Valentich went on to describe the UFO in detail.
3) Mr. Nixon, spokesman for the Minister of Transport in Canberra, said, "we believe that air safety investigators can probably come to better conclusions than the press. We have our own views on what happened and they *certainly don't include UFOs.*" (emphasis added). The Melbourne Department of Transport added that it was department policy not to release tapes during an accident investigation.

Arguments Against:
1) The Department of Transport denied that it withheld anything pertinent to the UFO encounter, despite newspaper reports to the contrary (Christchurch STAR, Oct. 25). The six-minute transcript, they claimed, is complete from beginning to end. The transmission breaks were just that, probably Valentich's finger holding the microphone while looking away. The rest of the tape simply records his departure from Moorabbin up to the start of the encounter.
2) Guido Valentich asked to hear the tape to assure himself that nothing had been hidden. The pilot's father stated that what he heard was the same as the transcript; he didn't believe anything was missing.

PREMISE #6: VALENTICH'S DISAPPEARANCE WAS A BIZARRE SUICIDE.
Arguments in Favor:
1) Many of the features suggesting a hoax (failure to call for landing lights, the claim that he only filed a one-way flight plan, etc.) also support the idea that he *never intended* to return.
2) Judging by their quotes in the press, Valentich's family and girl friend were told different stories regarding his return. Miss Rushton told the papers that he was supposed to come back the same night to take her to a disco. The time she states for his return varies in different press accounts ("7 PM" in the DAILY TELEGRAPH, "7:30 PM" in the SUNDAY TELEGRAPH and "8 PM" according to Harry Griesburg), but the pilot could never have made it back before 9 PM. Conversely, he told his parents he intended to get back at 10 o'clock. "We were expecting him home," Mr. Valentich said, "because another family was having a social reunion and he was coming, too." Was he handing them all a line?

Arguments Against:
1) Gary Groci, a family friend, stated that "Freddie was a very stable personality. He had a very happy family life, a nice girlfriend and was doing what he loved to do, which was flying. He enjoyed life far too much to want to kill himself."
2) Rhonda Rushton: "He was a very happy person and had lots of friends."
3) Why would he have pocketed $200 that morning (according to his parents) to purchase the crayfish if he wasn't planning to land?

Obviously, there is no clear way to choose among all of these possibilities with the information at hand. The Department of Transport says their files are "open" on this case in the absence of any "new leads", and with good reason. Strictly speaking, this case is a single-witness Nocturnal Light (or CE I, if you're not too fussy about distance requirements); furthermore, the witness is unavailable! Were it not for the dramatic implications of that "unavailability", the case would be minor in stature, instead of being hailed as the new "Capt. Mantell" or "Col. Coyne" episode of 1978. This case makes the 19th UFO entry in the Center for UFO Studies' computerized UFOCAT reference—out of 70,000 separate sightings—where a pilot was killed or disappeared following a UFO encounter. In addition, the failure of the engine could be construed as typical of the "EM" (electro-magnetic) interference effects noted in over 800 cases. Say Guido Valentich, "I've been told that UFOs can cause a plane's engine to react the way my son reported his was. They seem to have some sort of electrical field which affects engines." "Seems", of course, is the key word here, since the other cases usually had the benefit of an engine or electrical system that can be restarted once the UFO departs the immediate area.

There are other arguments much harder to debate, naturally: the prospect of window reflections or, less unlikely, hallucination, leading to a crash. Yet it is already safe to suspect that the files on this remarkable adventure will be open . . . forever.

When Southern Air Services fills out their insurance claim on the loss of their $43,000 Cessna, what will they list as the cause of the loss?

? ? ? ?

WERE OTHER UFO SIGHTINGS LINKED TO THE VALENTICH UFO?

Bass Strait has been the scene of UFO sightings throughout the 20th century. Back in 1896, hundreds of people were reporting "cigar-shaped" objects flying over the Strait. Fred Valentich's sighting highlighted six weeks of UFO reports from this region, with reports submitted to the King Island police and the island's local paper. Sgt. J. Woodward of Currie, King Island was notified of strange lights appearing to the north of the island. An air and sea search was established but no source of the flare-like lights was found. Sept. 12th saw the sighting of "oval lights" which lit up the area like daylight, as seen on numerous occasions by a nurse in the company of others. These lights also disappeared when the witnesses went out to investigate.

A number of UFO sightings were disclosed to the press (and local UFO groups) which occurred on the same day as Fred Valentich's disappearance. Summaries of these cases appear below in chronological order:

(cont. on p. 10)

WHAT WAS THAT METALLIC NOISE?

Valentich in Cockpit

No progress was made in identifying the nature of the metallic noise heard at the end of Fred Valentich's transmission. After the pilot said his last words ("Delta Sierra Juliet, Melbourne . . . ") he held the microphone open for 17 seconds. It was here that the noises were heard. Although the Department of Transport won't play the tape to the public while the inquiry is underway, they have played it back to Valentich's father, Guido. According to the elder Valentich, Fred seemed fairly calm until the very last call he made; then "his voice seemed to diminish in strength as if he was gasping or choking". Guido Valentich then heard the metallic noise being broadcast and likened it to a microphone swinging freely and banging against something. He feels Fred might have collapsed with his finger still holding down the button on the mike and it was his arm swinging. Other opinions have been ventured. One Department of Transport report described the noise as "two empty beer cans being banged together". The controller who was in contact with Valentich, Steve Robey, said "it sounded like the rapid keying of a mike." A more dramatic appraisal in the press had the noise being "typical of a plane landing on the water like the metal being torn off the bottom."

The Department of Transport feels that the "open microphone" breaks throughout the transmission occurred when Valentich turned to look out of the window while holding the button down.

FRED VALENTICH: A PERSONAL PROFILE

Fred Valentich got out of bed on Oct. 21 at 7:30 AM, the time he always got up. He showered, shaved and donned a pair of jeans and a blue, open-neck shirt. After eating a light breakfast of toast and coffee, he left his parents, telling them he would probably be back late and not to worry. When he left the house, he took $200 with him to buy the crayfish from King Island fishermen. Then he drove to the disposal store on Puckle St. in Moonee Ponds where he worked as assistant manager.

Arriving at work at 9 AM, he met the owner of the store, Dick Williams and talked about sports. His normal duties were checking stock, sweeping up and serving customers. Fred's employer told the SUNDAY PRESS that "Fred was very quiet that day, but then again he was quiet most of the time. He was the type of bloke who never spoke unless he had something to say. On this particular day, he seemed cheerful enough. If there was something bothering him, he was hiding it well enough. The only thing I remember was that he was very anxious to finish work.

"He mentioned something about flying over to King Island and he seemed very excited. I'll never forget his last words as he walked outside. He looked up at the clear, blue sky and said: 'It's going to be a nice day to go flying.' "

Then Fred attended a 3½-hour class in meteorology at Moorabbin Airport, which ended at 6 PM. Ironically, he had taken with him a book filled with a collection of UFO and "space" clippings in it. He was still in good spirits when he chatted with a few friends before walking over to the Cessna he rented . . . and at 6:19 PM, VH: DSJ was airborne—for the last time.

Fred Valentich, the oldest of four children, was born in Melbourne shortly after his parents migrated from Trieste, Italy in 1957. His father, Guido, is a design draftsman who met his wife on the voyage out in 1955. Fred grew up in his home town of Avondale Heights a tall, skinny boy with wavy black hair. A former teacher at Keilor High School described him as quiet, friendly and popular. "He wasn't what you'd call a brilliant student but he was a determined kid who seemed to have made up his mind what he wanted to do in life at a very early age." . . . meaning flying.

His parents agree that he wanted to be a pilot before he was 12 years old. "Once I took him down to Moorabbin and we went up in an aeroplane and ever since then he wanted to be a pilot," his father said. "I didn't take much notice until he was 17 and joined the Air Training Corps." His mother, Alberta, said that despite his other hobbies, "flying was the thing that made him the most happy. At first we tried to convince him to give up the idea because we felt it was too dangerous. But he was so keen on it, he eventually talked us into letting him go for his private license. In fact, he wanted his commercial pilot's license so bad, he became terrified of failing the course.

"He was very superstitious, too, and for this reason he avoided telling many people that he was going for it. Somehow he believed that this could bring him bad luck." Mrs. Valentich had even taken on a part-time job as a shop assistant to help pay for her son's commercial pilot course. "I didn't mind making the sacrifice. We are a close family who like to help each other. We all wanted Freddie to succeed. We were very proud of him."

His mother described him as a shy young man who had difficulty talking to people, especially girls. Miss Rhonda Rushton was a rare example of dating for him.

CASE	TIME	PLACE	NUMBER OF WITNESSES	DURATION
#1	2 PM	Currie, King Island	1 (young woman)	10 min.

APPEARANCE: Silver "golfball"-shape, 2 times the size of a small plane.
BEHAVIOR: Seen 70° up in sky; moved out of a cloud, east to west toward the sea, very high up. After moving away a distance, it stopped and backed up slowly.

#2	3 PM	Corio, Geelong	13 (teenage boys	10-15 min.

APPEARANCE: Two cigars connected by shiny pipes. No wings seen. Metallic silk color against a bright blue sky.
BEHAVIOR: Very slow travel directly overhead, moving west to east.

#3	4:15 PM	Cape Otway	2 (mother & son)	

APPEARANCE: Two cigars with fins at the rear—no wings—bright, gleaming silver, which became white.
BEHAVIOR: Coming from the SW, 75° up. Flying in close, precise formation. Then they swept north with "jet-like" speed.

(FRED VALENTICH SIGHTING HERE, FROM 7:06 to 7:12 PM)

#4	7:10 PM	Frankston	3 (mother & 2 kids)	(1 mile of driving)

APPEARANCE: Red/pink/white "skyrocket".
BEHAVIOR: Seen up over the hills in the east.

#5	7:10 PM	Brooklyn	2 (bank mgr. & wife)	(see text)

APPEARANCE: Solid mass of light with 4 vivid projections. Green flashing lights on the left. Color of "a star".
BEHAVIOR: Hovering directly before car at low angle. Moved at a slow pace and was not gone from sight until the couple drove to nearby Geelong.

#6	8:15 PM	Bateman's Bay (30 km N)	2 (couple)	5 min.

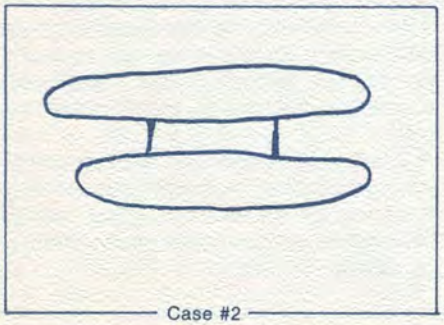
APPEARANCE: Bright, white object seen against a clear sky.
BEHAVIOR: "impossible acrobatics", completely distinguished from planes. Heading towards Sydney.

#7	9 PM	Warrnambool	2 (housewives)	more than 30 min.

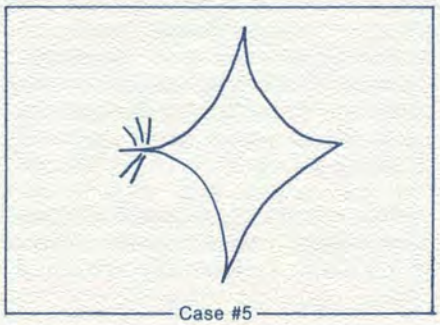
APPEARANCE: Five times a star, red/orange.
BEHAVIOR: Hovering at first in the SE at a 75° angle, then it moved quickly to the SW and stopped 10° up. It faded, left a yellow glow, and lit up again.

An RAAF spokesman said they had received 11 sighting reports in four days following the pilot's disappearance. The Victorian UFO Research Society received 45 reports by Nov. 1. The RAAF in Canberra said they have thoroughly checked 1000 Australian sightings since 1960. While there had been no annual increase in reports in recent years, the number of sightings deemed "unidentifiable" had risen from 3% four years ago to 10% this year.

Case #3



Case #2



Case #5

16 UFOS FROM 183 U.S. CASES: Aug. 15-Sept. 14

167 reports were judged to be identifiable or inappropriate. Refer to the "Profile" feature for monthly evaluations. We ran out of room in this issue to list all 16 UFO descriptions; we even wanted to list 14 reports for the 160 sightings for the next monthly period through Oct. 14, one of which was the Case of High Merit in this issue. IUR will present these next time along with the IFO Highlights.

U.S. SIGHTINGS

HOW WE LEARN OF UFO'S: UFO reports are from news departments, civilian organizations and individuals all over the world, but most of our reports stem from the Center for UFO Studies' UFO Central Hotline. This is a 24-hour, toll-free telephone service for the exclusive use of law enforcement agencies, FAA agencies, planetaria and other formal channels. This gives us the chance to follow up *all* cases rapidly for first-hand information with unlimited long-distance capability. Other advantages include screening of the hoaxers Indeed, police who patrol when others are asleep are encouraged to fill this void.

HOW WE DEFINE UFO'S: Any anomalous aerial phenomena whose appearance and/or behavior can't be ascribed to conventional objects and effects—not only by the original witnesses, but also by analysts who possess technical qualifications the original observer may lack.

NL—Nocturnal Light: distant anomalous lights seen in the night sky
DD—Daylight Discs: distant disc-like objects seen during the day
RV—Radar/Visual: UFOs seen by radar and vision simultaneously

CE I—Close Encounter of the First Kind: UFOs seen within 500 feet
CE II—Close Encounter of the Second Kind: CE I's that leave behind physical traces
CE III—Close Encounter of the Third Kind: CE I with humanoid occupants seen

HOW WE NUMBER CASES: All UFO sightings will receive a three element number which will serve as a case "name". The first numbers refer to the volume and issue number of the edition that contains the case, and the last number refers to the order it arrived (example: 1-1-7, the seventh case of the first issue).

1 — UFO of High Merit

First, a comprehensive study of the UFO's reported characteristics, then the technical judgment necessary to satisfy our UFO definition.

PHYSICAL TRACE CASE IN MISSOURI

CASE #3-22-119

Imagine a physical trace case boasting six witnesses, broad daylight viewing conditions, and a distance of less than 300 feet separating the UFO from the witnesses who actually watched the UFO lift up off the ground, leaving the trace behind. Such a case took place in rural Jenkins, Missouri, complete with all of these desirable features . . . as well as a couple of peculiar ones: The UFO was only about four feet in actual size and was seen for two hours! Read on.

ENVIRONMENT

DATE: October 8, 1978
STARTING TIME: 7 AM
PLACE: Jenkins, Missouri in Barry County—1.6 miles E of Rt. 39, 0.4 mile W of Flat Creek at the Marlett Sturgell farm. The area is typified by several hundred acres of rural property.

The landing site is located 285 feet south of the house. The field containing the site is separated from a second field to the east by a fence and a few scattered trees. The site field is surrounded by heavy timber to the south, west and north. There is a narrow clearing northwest of the field over which the object ascended. The landing site field is lower in elevation than the farm house and has a gradual slope to Flat Creek.

Photo taken at the landing site looking back toward the house.

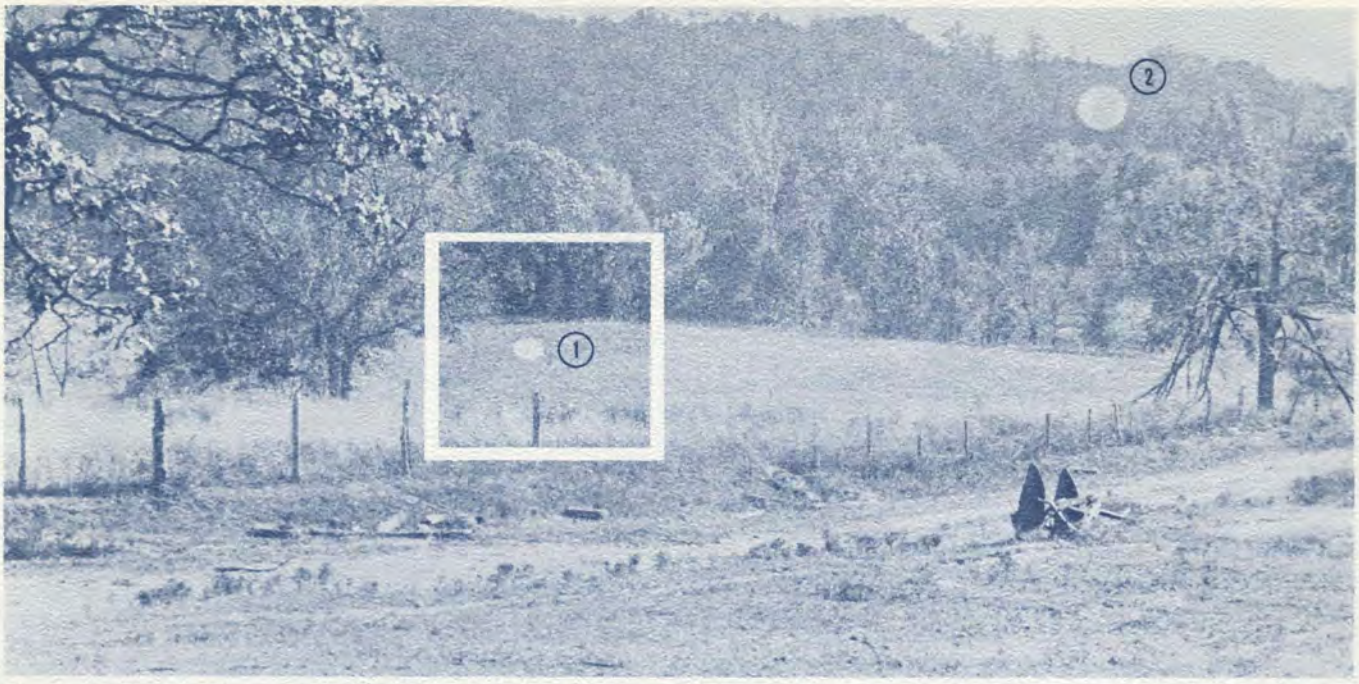
APPEARANCE

All witnesses agreed that the object was on oval- (or egg-) shaped form, distinctly outlined and reflective of sunlight. The object had an estimated size of 4-5 feet in length and 3-4 feet in height. It looked white in color when it was on the ground, but seemed brilliant silver once it ascended. A "darker section" seen on the surface revealed a rotation rate of once every two seconds or so. No other details or protuberances could be seen on the object's surface. No sound was ever heard, either.

WITNESS REACTION

The six witnesses include:
- Marlett Sturgell, 71
- Dora Sturgell, 69 (Marlett's wife)
- Norman Sturgell, 24 (Marlett's son)
- Raymond Morgan, 37 (son-in-law)
- Francis (Sturgell) Morgan, 37
- Bruce Morgan, 16.

Francis Morgan was visiting her parents at the time of the incident. At 7 AM, Dora Sturgell took her grandson, Bruce, to the window to see a coyote which frequently wandered in the field to the south of the house. When they looked outside, they saw a white form in between the coyote and a cow with a calf. Dora mentioned it to her husband and daughter. Their decision at that time? A large piece of paper, blown into the



Reconstruction of the way the UFO appeared to the witnesses when it lifted up above the ground (1), and then flew off to the NW.

area overnight, so they only glanced at it furtively from then on.

Ted Phillips was impressed with the sincerity of the six witnesses with whom he spoke personally. Mr. Sturgell was quite adamant that the event took place as described: "I hope to fall dead right here this minute if it didn't do just like I said ... I would swear on a stack of bibles that it looked to me like (his description) ... It sure was there, I never seen anything like it, may God strike me dead if I'm not telling the truth."

MOTION

The families continued to watch it occasionally for two hours. Then, at 9 AM, Marlett left the house to go to the barn, located 125 SE of the farm house. As he reached the barn, Francis saw the object rise above the ground about four or five feet, a rapid ascent at a fairly steep angle. Everyone ran outside to get a better look. Marlett, himself, had just reached the barn when he looked up and saw the oval at an altitude of 30 to 50 feet above the ground. All six witnesses stood 20 feet south of the house as they watched it travel through an opening in the trees to the west. It ascended rapidly, slowed somewhat as it gained altitude, turned slightly to the right, turned to the left and continued to move away in a smooth motion.

As it proceeded to the northwest, the witnesses took note of a larger, more distant object which seemed to be stationary. Indeed, as it emerged from behind a small cloud, the witnesses felt it was the cloud that was moving. It was assumed that the new object was an airplane. No wings, sound or vapor trail were detected, however. Once the oval reached a point near the "airplane", it started moving as well. Both objects appeared as one and they moved away rapidly to the northwest until they disappeared in the distance.

Total flight time: 5-10 minutes. Total duration in view: about 2 hours.

WEATHER

The witnesses noted that the sky was clear; weather bureau accounts in that area agreed. The following data will be important in the conclusions section:

JOPLIN: 7 AM temperature—50°, 9 AM —56°
9AM winds from the SSE (160°) at 7 knots

MONETT: At 9: 49, winds were from the SE (140°) at 8 knots, and from the south (180°) at 11 knots.

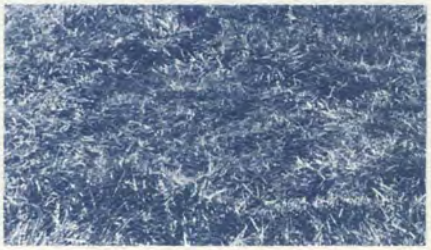
SPRINGFIELD: 7 AM temperature—43°, 9 AM—50°
9 AM winds from the SSE (160°) at 10 knots
(1 knot = 1.15 mph)

ON THE CASE

Original source: direct call to the Center for UFO Studies. A preliminary interview was conducted by phone by Allan Hendry. Ted Phillips, who lives in Missouri and specializes in physical trace cases (how's that for serendipity?), was sent to the scene. When he arrived on Oct. 14, Phillips interviewed the Sturgells, took pictures and samples of the trace site and made some on-site measurements. He then interviewed the Morgans on Nov. 3.

When Francis Morgan went back into the house, she called the Barry County Sheriff Department. A Raymond Lassiter who lives nearby was also called; he came over before noon and took the first picture of the physical trace site. Deputy Steve Breeden arrived at 4: 08 PM in the afternoon with a Paul McNabb. Breeden took some photographs, plant and soil samples, which Ted Phillips obtained.

The first picture is the one taken within 2-3 hours of the trace's creation. The picture below, taken by Ted Phillips 6 days later, shows the advanced deterioration of the grass throughout the trace; it should be



noted that a tarpaulin was placed over the trace to protect it, as per Hendry's request. Phillips took a great variety of trace samples from the trace itself and the surrounding area for a "control" comparison. The samples were taken at different depths, from ½-inch to 2 inches. Soil moisture measurements were consistent throughout the area of the trace (fluctuating from .22 to .33). The trace itself measured 4½ feet long by 3½ feet wide. The long dimension of the oval-shaped trace seems to be aligned with the direction of flight of the UFO, 320° NW, an interesting feature. A simple penetrometer test showed that no force in excess of one ton bore down on the trace area. Lab tests at this time are still in a preliminary state, but a sensitive scintillometer test has revealed no sign of radioactive contamination. Results of further tests will be printed in IUR as they become available.

CONCLUSIONS

It goes without saying that there is only one alternate explanation for this well-perceived Close Encounter: a balloon.

- The object looked like a balloon.
- It looked flatter (though smooth) on the ground than when it rose into the air.
- The direction of travel (NW) conformed perfectly to the ground winds (SE).

The slight fluctuations would simply be minor variations in the wind direction near the earth. At 10 mph, a wind-propelled object would have flown over 1½ miles in ten minutes.

- There is a National Weather Service balloon launch site at nearby Monett which launches an 8-ft. radiosonde balloon at 6 AM (and 6 PM) every day.

Thus, one scenario could go like this: the 6 AM launch developed a leak and came down on the Sturgell farm at 7 AM. It sat there for two hours until the temperature rose 6-7 degrees by 9 AM (see "Weather"). This made the critical difference in buoyancy and the balloon lifted off again. The brown grass was due to deprivation from sunlight by the balloon.

Now for the reasons that make this scheme improbable:

- Monett is located 15 miles NW of Jenkins. The Sturgell's are 4½ miles south of town. With the wind direction from the SE, the weather balloon would have been carried *away* from the scene, not toward it. (This doesn't rule out a balloon from some unknown second source, however.)
- Mr. Sturgell said he felt no breeze at all, yet the object took off "fast".
- Grass which is yellowed by covering it up for a few hours tends to recover quickly when uncovered and exposed to sunlight (try it with a sheet of cardboard). The trace was the object of attention all weekend, however, and it never recovered.
- A Monett weather spokesman said their balloons "stay down" when they drop.

Clearly, hope for an answer to this case will hinge on the trace analysis. Was the grass and soil subjected to heat, ionizing radiation, chemicals? Mr. Morgan was the first to arrive at the site and he noted that the ground felt neither warm nor cool to the touch. He did note that the swirling seen in the first photo of the trace was quite distinct. Only time will tell if the trace can help support what appears to be one of the *best-witnessed* CEII trace cases ever.

2—UFOs of Limited Merit

These reports are of intermediate stature. They are UFOs in the sense that we don't know what they are, but for a variety of stated reasons (distance, poor details, single witness, etc.) they are not worthy of the closest scrutiny. Names of witnesses in this category are generally withheld unless the news media have already revealled them.

NOTE: UFOs and IFOs alike can fail to appear on radar for a wide variety of technical reasons.

CASE	TYPE	DATE	TIME	DURATION	WITNESSES	PLACE

THE ABSENT UFO RESEARCHER

3-10-17	CEI	8-18-78	11:20		1	Port Crane, NY

Douglas Dains (known to IUR readers as a researcher of the Lindley, NY CEIII) had a relative staying at his house alone this night, when the reception on the TV went bad at 11:15. Then Dains's UFO (magnetic field) detector started buzzing from the back bedroom. Dains's relative (identity withheld here) stepped outdoors and watched the domed saucer (shown in the witness sketch) approach from the NW, about 25° up, to a position 50 feet behind a tree and about 45 feet in the air. This would place the UFO 120 feet west from the house. Dains's relative went indoors and watched through a screen door. It hovered there for 30 seconds; note the red light on top of an antenna and the arrow-like projection that came from the south side of the object. It then departed to the SW with the arrow only a few feet away from it, disappearing beyond the mountain nearby.

Dains is the first to acknowledge the peculiarity of such an exotic Close Encounter allegedly happening right at his own house while he was gone, yet he takes the matter seriously. Single witness case. Broome County Airport was aware of no UFOs (or planes) in the area.

A HUGE "CAR FENDER"

3-10-23	NL	8-20-78	1:30 AM	3-5 min.	1	Maplewood, NJ

A 41-year old nurse, sitting in her car on Oberlin St. (a suburban residential area) saw "beautiful" blue lights moving across and toward her from the east to her north. She got out of her car and watched it fly over the house yards. Then it stayed in place, rocking silently back and forth. It looked like 4 large blue lights spaced apart on what appeared to be a form shaped like a car fender. The angular size was huge, like a real car

fender only ten feet from the eye. The outline of this form was vague in the dark, however; mostly, the lights were all that could be seen. Then it took off rapidly to the NE, making noise (for the first time) like an "unfamiliar machine".

Single witness case. The nurse honked the horn to attract other witnesses out, to no avail. She then drove down the street ten houses and told a couple she knew about the incident. Suddenly, she heard the noise again and, looking back up the street, they saw "very tiny" red and white lights shooting up into the sky. This latter episode is far more uncertain in nature, however. The R.N. added that she is "used to reacting in emergencies".

A DAYLIGHT URBAN "CIGAR"

3-10-24 DD 8-20-78 7:30 PM 1 min. 1 Toledo, OH

A 64-year old security guard was on patrol in downtown Toledo (!) looking at a "large plane" approaching from the north against a clear, pre-sunset sky. As it passed overhead at a uniform speed, about 1500-2000 feet up, it could be resolved that it was actually a cigar (as sketched) with small brackets. It was dull silver, distinctly outlined and was twice the angular size of the full moon. It then continued its straight path southbound to the horizon.

A DAYLIGHT "FRISBEE"

3-10-28 DD 8-21-78 5:30 PM 5-8 min. 3 Indianapolis, IN

A 33-year old housewife, in the company of her 8- and 10-year old children, watched a silver "Frisbee" from their front porch in this urban residential area 3 miles north of the center of town. Standing outdoors, looking up at the clear sky, they saw the saucer in the SE, much larger than a full moon would look (at night) with an estimated real size as large as a car. The Frisbee had a sharp outline and a metallic appearance. No sound could be heard over the heavy traffic noise. According to the children, it then shot over to the SW in two seconds. Finally, it moved straight up out of sight in an instant.

No other witnesses reported. The mother noted that she "doesn't want to see it again."

A DAYLIGHT "CLOUD"

3-10-35 DD 8-22-78 7:03 AM 1½ min. 4 Moscow, PA

Four men were driving in a car pool to work at the Tobyhanna Army Depot. Driving in the Mt. Pocono region, they watched a small, circular, vague "cloud" descend suddenly in the south. The sun was to their left, the sky bright daylight with some (regular) clouds. As they watched the cloud before them while driving at expressway speeds, they watched it change to a bright silver and hover, though rocking from side to side. It now looked solid and metallic. It rose slightly and flew off to the SE at "800-900 mph".

CAR INTERFERENCE IN IOWA

3-10-55 CEII 8-24-78 10 PM few seconds 1 Ottuma, IA

A 54-year old cook was on her way from her brother's house about 10 miles south of town when this EM interference case occurred. She was on Cliffland Road northbound in her '72 Ford LTD, alongside of the Des Moines River in a wooded, rural area under a clear sky. Then a "huge" (full moon-size) red or orange light shot silently from the east to the west in several seconds "which seemed like forever". As it flew across the front of her car, her windshield fogged up and the car stalled out to a stop on the road. This interference lasted only a few seconds and the car restarted without her turning the key; the window defogged as quickly as it had steamed up. She last saw the light against a background of trees up ahead, lower than the treetops.

Single witness. After driving around for awhile, deciding what to do, she drove to the police station to report it. As she knew the personnel there, this carried the risk of ridicule from acquaintances. This witness was below average in her ability to communicate details well. It took a follow-up call to learn about the stalling of the car, for example. Still, this makes the third claim in 2 years of IUR's cases of a UFO causing a window to fog up. No odor was noted, but the windows were up.

CAR INTERFERENCE IN OHIO?

3-10-57 CEII 8-24-78 11:40 PM 5-7 min. 2 Ginghamsburg, OH

Two 19-year old girls, driving west near Ginghamsburg, OH, watched two oddly-colored orange light forms, twice the "size" of aircraft landing lights. The "balls" of light were prominent in the middle, faded at the ends. A humming sound could be heard both from the lights and from the car radio. The driver couldn't get her car to go faster than about 20 mph (a '73 Vega with manual 4-speed). The lights were coming from the left, one directly over the other. The two witnesses looked away momentarily ("did you see that?") and they were gone. They looked again, and the lights came over the car. From the south they had moved to the NW over a field; a rod or a light beam came down from one ball of light and shone a light at the witnesses for 1 second. The driver tried to flash the car lights at it, to no avail. They looked away briefly and did not get to see the manner in which the lights vanished.

While deeming the case an "EM interference" on the surface of it, we must note that the car continues to have engine trouble, though not as serious as before. The second witness told us that their previous station could not be heard on the radio during the event. The driver, who had never seen a UFO before, had the shakes afterwards and "wanted a tranquilizer".

DAYLIGHT SPHERE OVER MASSACHUSETTS

3-10-68 RV? 8-27-78 1:40 PM 1 min. 2 Provincetown, MA

Arthur Silva, 55, was flying in a Cessna 150, 10 miles NNW of Provincetown, near Cape Cod. With a clear sky and 15 miles visibility, the pilot and his passenger, Harold Johnson, 62, sighted a bright reflective object at their same (2500') altitude, directly ahead about 4 miles away. As it drew closer, it picked up speed and rushed toward them. Silva wondered why the Air Traffic Control at Logan International in Boston wasn't warning them. It shot by the Cessna's 3 o'clock position at about 600 mph. The slim closure angle inferred that it missed the plane by 1000 feet. Obstructing ribbing blocked their view once it went past the plane. Its appearance? A silvery-white, metallic sphere with no wings, an estimated 18 feet in actual size, and ¾ the angular size of the sun (or moon). Johnson felt it could have been an upended disc, face-on, some of which seemed translucent. He also thought he saw a light blue color associated with the trailing end of the form. Silva radioed the ATC in Boston about what had just streaked past them (without describing it); the radar operator, Peter Dibsbury, told them he, too, had just seen traffic pass him.

Because of the busy activity fielded by the FAA that Sunday afternoon, Dibsbury took little note of the incident. Ray Fowler, the investigator of this case, has called for the tape recording of the conversation. Fowler also conducted a character check on the witnesses by calling people who know them. Silva had a loaded camera in the plane but never thought to use it (as is so often the case). Could it have been a balloon? The 10 knot wind from the ESE would carry one roughly from the correct direction (the Cessna was flying SE, the UFO NNW); the only known balloon launch site in the area is at Chatham, MA; they put up a short-lived balloon at 7 AM (and later at 7 PM).

AND THEN, 3 HOURS LATER . . . . .

3-10-69 DD 8-27-78 4:45 PM 10 sec. 1 Gloucester, MA

A 48-year old radiological monitor for both MUFON and CUFOS watched a bright yellow disc approaching him from low in the north. As it passed silently over the area, its appearance became clear as the yellow-orange cylinder sketched above. At an estimated 2000 feet, it appeared to be "8 times the size of Venus" in angular size and smaller than an F-100 fighter in actual size. It moved off to the south, flying faster than a jet at the same level.

The witness has a Masters Degree in Science, served in Korea as a radar-sonar operator, and is well-acquainted with aircraft appearance. The rapid motion and shape does not conform to a balloon and the only one launched in that area was the one noted in the last case. Besides, the wind would have propelled a balloon in the wrong direction (WNW). no unusual activity was noted by the FAA in the area, military or otherwise. The case was investigated by Ray Fowler.

MEANWHILE, A LITTLE WAYS NORTH . . . .

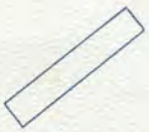
3-10-87 NL 8-30-78 8:45 PM 20-30 sec. 1 Nashua, NH

A 33-year old technical service administrator for a nuclear diagnostic company was standing outdoors at a shopping center in a suburban, residential area when she spotted a formation of 6 to 8 white lights arranged in a circle (slightly smaller than the full moon in angular size). They were first seen 70° up in the SE and moved in a straight path, disappearing (into the clouds?) about 40-50° up in the north. No sound was heard; two aircraft were seen in the area at the same time.

A spotlight in the sky? The sky was partly cloudy, and the witness did say that she could have seen the formation against a cloud background at all times; yet the center of the formation was dark, as were the spaces between the lights, and its motion was not an arch around the sky.

AGAIN, 3 HOURS LATER . . . .

3-10-90 NL 8-30-78 11:10 PM 1 min. 1 Gloucester, MA



For almost two hours, the witness, a 56-year old executive of a sheet metal firm, looked out his window to try to see the cause of a loud sound like an aircraft warming up in five-second bursts. On the third occasion, he saw over Ipswich Bay a sharply-outlined, elongated, fiery red rectangle "like a red hotdog". It was moving north to south 50° up at around 100 mph. One end was dipped down 45°. It stopped, hovered for about 10 seconds and moved out of sight behind trees. The rectangle had a 6:1 length/width ratio, and appeared to be ½-mile away, 1200-1500 feet up.

No noise was heard through the open window while watching the UFO. He did hear the strange noise again after retiring to bed. A wind-propelled object would have been heading east. The witness reported his sighting to the Logan Airport in Boston; Ray Fowler investigated the case.

ANOTHER VEHICLE STALLED

3-10-91 CEII 8-30-78 11 PM-mid. 1 hour 1+2 Nisula, MI

A 38-year old disabled man was driving his '76 Chevy pick-up on Rt. 38 ½-mile west of town when a cone-shaped form flew toward him from the east. It had 2 steady red lights at the ends and one steady white light in the middle. It looked somewhat larger than the full moon in angular size as it flew "real low" and silently over the truck. The truck then stalled out for a second; the driver had to turn the key to restart the motor. The

PROFILE: AUGUST, 1977

UFOS & IFOS THIS MONTH

TOTAL UFOS THIS YEAR

UFOS:

NL	5
DD	4
RV	2
CEI	5
CEII	3

Total Number of Reports	205
Average per day	6.6
Peak Activity (28 cases	8/7

Total Number of UFOs	19
Total Number of IFOs	186

UFOs: 9% **IFOs:** 91%

UFO proceeded on, moving up, down and in all directions. When he arrived home, a mile-and-a-half further west, he was joined by his wife and daughter. The family used binoculars to watch the red lights, only now moving slowly from the east to the south in an up/down, back and-forth fashion.

The Chevrolet pickup had no previous history of stalling, according to the owner. He described his emotional reactions as "so damned scared". The state police relayed this call in, but no other witnesses.

EDITORIAL (from p. 1)

that one may have tried hard to discredit it but has failed.

"There are photos that fall into that category, but the ones you published do not. . . . . this article, with its grossly misleading pictures, was certainly not worthy of you. I hope that in the future you will publish responsible articles on this subject, such as those to be found in the new publication, *Journal of UFO Studies,* which presents balanced and scholarly views on this controversy."

In my editorial in the August 1978 issue of IUR I stressed the great difficulty of obtaining good UFO pictures and deplored their lack. Criticism came from readers who felt that I meant that there were no authentic UFO photos. I did not mean to imply this. I do believe that there are genuine UFO photos, but that they exist in a cesspool of fakes and misidentifications arising from the photographer's ignorance in the broad field of IFOs.

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